

Some days lately I touch a sense of peace by devynn emory & Jesse Darling

During the particular confinement of this past year, I've thought about the resonances I find in two peoples' bodies of work and the chance moments that sometimes bring those people together. I came to know devynn emory's work in the context of their Kin & Care research residency at Danspace Project in 2019-2020. It was there that I first encountered their performance lecture, ['mmm'](#) (movement meditation memorials), which I have returned to again and again this year as a way to sit with the loss— the felled 2020. Jesse Darling and I met sometime in May 2020 through the internet. What can a body do? and Who can a body be? are two emergent questions and between emory and Darling's work, there is a chance to ask this question and then sit with the replies in a variety of ways.

Here are nine letters between Jesse and devynn that stretch across the weeks between mid-February and late April. I keep returning to how devynn and Jesse each time reach for the referent 'to' / 'dear' / 'you'. There is a sense of the real reader, held and a sense that the correspondence will unfold as it needs to.

Jesse, devynn and I offer these letters to you as a chance to see a new encounter unfold. In their letters, I am reminded about what is possible to begin.

Thank you for reading.

love,
Asiya

Some days lately I touch a sense of peace

by Jesse Darling and devynn emory

the letters

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Feb 15, 2021 2:36 PM

Dear devynn,

I start writing to you when it's late at night and I'm awake with a toothache. I write from a temporary air bnb commune in a hamlet called Römnitz in the north of Germany (some friends and I are pooling resources and childcare while kindergartens are closed and one of the parents recovers from his top surgery). In my whole living memory I have never lived anywhere I couldn't hear a road or a train, but here the silence is total, especially at night. It feels unprecedented, for me - and I wonder what would happen to my neural wiring if I could somehow make a life inside it, i mean inside the silence, or if I could live in a way that meant hearing birds and trees and crickets and wind instead of phones and trams and bar fights and cars. But we can't stay here; as usual, this isn't my house.

A day or so before this, I was listening to the amazing music you sent while cooking the evening meal. After I had my kid I got very sick with the episodic autoimmune disease I now know was the reason for the debilitating pain and occasional paralysis I've experienced since childhood - rather than the growing pains and psychosomatics to which they were attributed. This time it took my whole right arm and hand, and my knees; long story, but it took me three and a half years to start dancing in the kitchen like I used to. I sometimes attribute that to the testosterone I've started injecting again, but I also wonder about t: the ways in which it could also be a placebo or a stand-in for some kind of desire. Desire for what, for a whom, becoming-I? I respect and love the trans kids with their absolutes but I can't share their conviction. I just felt I had to do this, like a calling, almost spiritual, but like any spirit journey I'm not at all clear on the purpose or the destination just yet. It's true it gave me back my body, and the body is what we have, I guess. Used to always think so. But when I couldn't use mine anymore - in the way I'd grown used to - I had to interrogate my whole sense of I and the ableist machismo with which I'd somehow constituted my sickly feminised self both with and against a sovereign white masculinity to which I knew better than to aspire. Or did I?

I danced while cooking to that music - I remember in particular the hunting song - a choreography of the knife moving swift and good like a long silver fish dancing in the stream. Pleasure of an old skill put to work after long latency.

Now when I write I'm numb on one side of the mouth where they pulled out the bad nerve. Topical numbness is a strange feeling in a living body and has the effect of making you feel everything very much, like silence has the effect of making you listen deeply. I'm thinking about you and how you work with bodies as a dancer, as a healer. How you work with bodies into death. I wonder what you think about the I in relation to the site of the body. Is a dead body still a person? What can be said about the parts of a living body that are numb or without feeling? Is the very question - of the I in relation to the site of the body - a false binary, cartesian fuckup, part of what must and can be decolonised (rather than abolished)? I mean, that last is a rhetorical question - of course it is. And yet I keep returning to it, or to something like it - for which I maybe don't have language yet. You?

I have to remember that we are strangers to each other while I write. It's easy to conjure a recipient in writing, but out of respect to the real person who will read this I'd better wait to hear back from you before I go on any further.

xo

JD

Mon, February 15, 10:06 PM

shiki hèch,

(translation- "is it pretty?", "is it good?") in one of my native languages- Lenape

as many of us Indigenous folk move toward the insistence of not losing our culture, and working as contemporary humans to find permission to both learn through the thick layers of assimilation while also being real to oneself; if i'm honest i'm not sure i would ever begin a conversation wondering if something is "pretty". i do think the english language however is embarrassingly bland and i prefer the curiosity embedded in this version of the hello versus what is supposed to be a question but really reflects the whiteness in the question which is really a question that isn't a question but one that centers the self and pushes a period out at the end of the question. like... "hey".

neither seem accurate to how i'd like to respond or reach you. i enjoyed watching a few of your videos and typing to you on my screen similar to how you did at the end of your video capturing some of the bright red bloody and flashy december celebrations. seeing your reflection in the snow ...ah...it's cold there too. it's exciting to see a shadow of someone, to have a memory of the unknown at the beginning of an introduction.

i hold up a little torch for you and all the parents finding creative solutions to support one another in this time where systems are crumbling down. the ones some of us never asked for anyway. the description of where you are was beautifully described, and i found my body relaxing into what i imagine some of the silence may feel like in my body. thank you for sharing that silence with me.

i'm coming off of a call with my client. my massage practice of 20 years has recently moved...online? you may or may not be wondering how one does any hands on body practice online. i certainly did. and it took almost a year for my stubborn ass to come up with creative solutions. i find such ground in my private practice, as it is the great balancer to the emergency work or hospice work i face in the hospital. the concept of folks feeling some relief after they leave my table has now become a miracle. the sensation of where our bodies connect and collaborate in that care is quite different than poking and prodding someone with machines. as my hours and days and months have disappeared my humanity as i became a soldier, or a covid nurse, or what the headlines are calling a hero, it felt especially hard to lose my private bodywork and healing practice. my patients in the hospital certainly aren't feeling better, or leaving to go anywhere but the next plane. and so, maybe my clients are now them in new form. this session i just had was a channeling session. i've always seen them, smelled them, heard them, or a combination of both. these Spirits love to chat! so i recently opened up sessions to do just this. in a really direct, pure, form.

i love this question you ask about the living body with sites of numbness. i think of the ways you describe your pain too and can almost hear the sound of the electricity of the nerve they removed that you call "the bad nerve". i see them running around solo doing a little dance.

i very differently than you but almost in some similar squiggle on a page, am currently enduring a very intense injury. one of the permanent scars from lifting dead bodies neglected by our governments. trying to lift them almost out of the reality. i've been keeping it secret for some time. i think losing family to covid, being overtaken by being a covid nurse, being a person who likes to have some privacy too but in this time feeling so exposed, i've hesitated. i imagine i also carry the old pressures of the ashamed injured dancer. and the weight of the untouchable healer. all this bs and yet yes- my body is the site of it all and so why am i so shy about it. i too confront my own ableism as i navigate the use of one less arm. the one seems to have turned to stone internally, no longer of flesh. i check myself again as i recall a patient from mine from some time ago who actually had this rare disease where her body turned hard in formation bit by bit, her face being last externally before it would consume her internally. let me state, that i am not having this experience. it's not lost on me that my chinese medicine degree tells me that my left side, the stone side, is the "feminine" side. does this side of me feel rejected after all these years off and on the sauce? i relate the t injections giving life. giving one a sense of renewed self, but not the self that others expect or desire. i suppose i'm most alive in an undetectable space. but not in a way i'd like folks to always be so concerned by.

i think being a body that holds and carries pain, sites of numbness, hidden "variables" (variables to what?), makes us or i'll say me...more comfortable with dying. but not because i think something is wrong with me even in this durational pain marathon of immobility. i think it has me trusting my body more. especially as someone who intentionally removed some flesh and now has for example numb nipples. it's like i thought i told my body how to be but the jokes on me...they told me- "going numb!" and i now am just...with that. it's a teacher. it tells me how to be now.

i've decided this letter is way too long but that i won't go back and edit it. because i'd like it to feel like we are talking. not worrying about the outcome here. wanishi for sharing and for listening. (gratitude)

kitchen cooking dances,
devynn

Friday, February 26, 9:19 PM

hello out there. i hope you are finding okay-ness. these days i'm not sure when i don't hear from someone if it's the typical- life got in the way times or if something is up. either are very likely. i'm back at the hospital after a long leave. i keep hearing myself saying it's a balm to return to this disability position....the vaccination center. somewhat of a full circle after being a covid nurse. being with the public again for 13 hours each day is a lot. i'm moved by the elders in chairs getting their first ever vaccine, the couples, the young people who have been waiting almost at the window for this moment for almost a year. there's also the trump folk who run right to an indoor restaurant as soon as they leave my station, despite all the education that they are not immune or superior.

i'm also in full-time production for my upcoming tour. and somehow pulling off a second premiere shortly after, multiple residencies and too many gigs to name. my client work online is a lift. it sounds like annoying abundance issues, but i do think folks are suddenly awake to death...and to indigeneity..and even think transness is cool. something i never thought i'd see. so i'm a magnet? i'm also laying on my couch with my snoring 14year old cat leeba, the love of my life, and truly this is the thing i wish to report. i wish i could record it for you. perhaps i will. i'm also growing garlic for the first time. the Lenapehoking soil has been absorbing so much toxic energy to renew, it's barely vibrant, so i went up north a few hours to collect an old mans goat poop and brought it back to my tiny little piece of earth in Brooklyn in hopes to nourish it. it's working. a Métis friend told me to bury my hair. i haven't done so yet but i've shed some blood. buried a few neighborhood cats. the last cat- returned earthside as a tomato plant! in the winter..which is not when tomato plants grow. the only thing i can think of, is that the cat had tomato seeds in between their little paws. or maybe decomposed and had undigested seeds in their stomach. i'm very moved by this!

i'll be brief as i'm preparing for a talk tonight. perhaps you'll join us if you get this.

<https://danspaceproject.org/calendar/cww-emory-pittman/>

zero pressure, simply an invite.

i'm sending miracles of re-incarnation to you on this friday,
devynn

*starting march 1, 2021 i will have slower response to emails M-W due to the demands of Nursing in COVID. thank you for your patience and support

Sun., Feb 28, 10:42 PM

Dear Devynn,

is it good? I've been thinking about you, or maybe with you, a lot. There's a lot I'd like to say, feels like words tumbling through my teeth in this little space of solitude I've grabbed - Sunday morning with coffee, today gray as February should be - though I've blossomed, with a conflicted heart, at the unseasonal sun. I sat last night by the water and watched the sun go down and thought it would be nice to have a 'real' conversation someday, but then I remembered that this is a real conversation; or that's the difficulty and the pleasure of the current paradigm - it's what we've got. There's an urgency that strains against habit that has us corresponding with strangers across the sea; perhaps a sublimation, but also a real and appropriate response to this moment, which is to say I have a hunch that the collective unconscious has us seeking connection and corroboration across time and space, less mediated and performative, more generative and exploratory - what was once promised by social media, but now realised with new agency. Cruising spirits away from the main drag, quiet meets in the ether. As though there is something urgent to learn from it, from each other. The reason for that urgency isn't clear to me yet but time always shows its methods eventually.

I can and cannot imagine what the 13 hour days in the hospital might do to you, to your body. On the one hand working with the public all day is energising and galvanising, and on the other hand draining and exhausting, at least as I remember. I've been thinking too of your secret injury. You know, as a dancer, that the body is smart and it will tell you the truth even if you don't want to listen - the best and sternest teacher, as you said. I mean, the mourning we don't have time or space to process will show itself in our limbs and guts; not just one's own sorrows but the sorrows of the mother and father, of one's own people whoever they are, of those like and unlike us, of strangers and friends. You know this, as a healer. Those who work with the sick and the dying must themselves find ways to loose the sorrow they hold; I feel like 'after this' there will be so much holding of one another, so much work to do. I don't know much about your life beyond your work (which maybe is a lot of what you're doing right now, by the sound of it) but I'm glad you have Leeba, whose purring, I've read - at its frequency of 25-150 hertz - is the good vibration that promotes healing and strength in the bodies alongside it.

People waking to death, yes. Feels like the whole colonial project was about banishing or relegating death to the space of the Other; like the Trump people and others invested in the wound of whiteness seem not to believe in their own death, somehow - like dying is for other people, naturalised for other people. I have a working theory, probably developed elsewhere by smarter and more eloquent people, that the trauma of modernity is the cartesian split - when body and mind, male and female, 'nature' and 'culture', living and dying, feeling and knowing were separated into 1-0 binary, with the zero being the space of liminality and undertow, underworld, undercommons - and the one being the signifying, additive, sovereign. And of course these in colonial modernity are hierarchised, unlike the yin/yang of harmonious balance in all things. I see how that's shifting, now, finally. The canonical theology of modernity is showing its asymmetries and arrogance, like the idea of apocalypse is itself an eschatological

phenomenon, christian settler terror metabolising its own violence as fear. It feels like suddenly there's a lot to learn from indigeneity, a hunger for that knowledge - perhaps because indigenous people in colonial nation-states have already survived an apocalypse or two or three. Do you experience this hunger as a burden or as a gift, or both? When you get wary, how do you navigate? I feel you're taking solace and lessons from a land that lives in you, as you live in and amongst it; I'm projecting, but maybe in that way you don't have to feel alone in it.

I thought while sitting by the water about how much my relationship to place has been marred by the enforcement of private property, especially in England where I grew up and where there are functionally no common lands, an enclosure that fed directly into settler-colonialism. Like the mind itself experiences an enclosure and a censure: forbidden to consider the ground one's own, which means you may never develop a relationship with it, never need to take responsibility for it. Another wound. And I thought too of the bucolic American fantasies of land seized and stolen - Whitman, Walden - the arc of desire that makes a stolen thing one's own. Somewhere in all this there must be a way to love and work with/in the places we find ourselves, spirits of the dead and the living all around. The cat coming back as a tomato plant; the cycle of things, in which death plays an irreplaceable part.

I am - have been - so very afraid of death, and of 'apocalypse,' especially when I was ill. Early days with my kid I would look at her and cry because of a strong sense that I would not live to see her grow up. It hurts to type that, perhaps because I was unwell in other ways but a part of me is afraid that it was intuition. My intuition is good, but it scrambles and turns to static when I think about death. In these fears I most meet the white wo/man in me, the modern subject, the ego. Some days lately I touch a sense of peace around that; or I understand that what I was so afraid of was in effect already happening, you know, like in some ways I was dying, or at least part of me was: a million nerves were in kamikaze mode and about to quit their post forever, some never to return. I think too that the man I was died in childbirth, and he's never coming back. Living through your own death, or your own micro-apocalypse (ain't all human apocalypses micro, after all?) just isn't an easy road, but perhaps that's just what life is - an ongoing series of deaths and regenerations until there isn't anymore.

You spoke about the untouchable healer thing. I think also about the wounded healer. But maybe 'wounded' is only one way to describe the experience of those on the other side of the colonial modern 1-0. In the hole, the hold of the 0, endlessness, ancientness, infinite possibility.

On a good day I think I see it all in balance, the current regime as arbitrary and petty as it is, another world already present in the wind, perhaps a drift from the past or a gust of future. My dad told me once that the motes of dust you see in the light are particles of skin and bone and feces from people living and/or dead a thousand years. "You could be breathing in a tiny particle of a big crap that Jesus sat down and took one day," he said. My dad told me a lot of things I now know to be bullshit but to this day I don't know if there was truth in this one or not. As a materialist metaphor for how our ancestors are right here among us, I guess it works.

Again this letter got too long because I saved up the thoughts all week while doing my 13 hour days with two three year olds with their own ways of talking and thinking. So many questions to ask you about spirits and covid and death but I don't know how to form them except like this in a letter. I missed your thing on Friday - though I signed up for it and everything! - because I was asleep by then, but it looks like I'll be able to watch it on Youtube soon. I was sitting in bed next to sleeping Lux while listening to Leeba on my headphones; I tried to record Lux's breathing for you but it was too quiet for the recording to hear.

Re/generations and motes in the light,
JD

Sunday, March 7, 5:09 PM

Devynn,

Here's a quick note to say I just watched your Without Walls conversation with Angie. Perhaps because I'm exhausted from seasonal allergies and childcare (talking of relation to site and space) I started crying when Spirit came on and the two of you began moving. It felt so alive and defiant in a year of stasis and abstracted intimacies, endless zoom talks of being a face in a box and a brain in a jar. And then you started talking about "where you coming from?" and I felt to share a story with you about one of Lux's books.

Lux - my kid - is jewish-japanese on her other parent's side and on mine there is (as far as anyone knows) lumpen displaced white trash since (on my mother's side) the land clearances and colonising of Scotland by the English, and (on my father's side) the prison ships to Australia. She doesn't look like the blonde blue-eyed German kids here (and in this country, especially in the East and outside the cities, we need to remember that the people having children are the descendants of those who perpetrated a genocide and its very very few survivors). I don't speak to my mother much though I'm aware time is running out in this life, and my father has two children of his own from another marriage - both are in another country. On the other side, there is almost nobody left alive to talk about what happened to them, to impart their mother tongues, to answer the question - should Lux ever ask - of 'where are you coming from?' And then, because she looks different, there will be the question 'but where are you really from?' and because these things start early, her other parent bought her a book whose title is more or less the same as you and Angie's prompt just to foster some language around an experience.

Where Are You From? follows a brown kid in conversation with her Abuelo who, in answering the question, tells her that she is from the grandmothers who wait with white handkerchiefs in the square for children who never arrive, from those enslaved and brought in ships who built this country up, from the pampas and the warm ocean, from hurricanes and dark storms, and a tiny singing frog that calls the island people home when the sun goes to sleep. But Abuelo, she says at last, where am I really from?

And Abuelo goes, you want a place?

And then the next page is a double spread and the drawing is just Abuelo's broad shoulders and hand crossed across his chest, with his big finger pointing to a place to the left of his sternum where the heart is located. "You are from here," he says.
From my love, and those who loved before.
You are from all of us.

And because it's unclear whether he means the extended family or the Ancestors or the whole human phenomenon, the first time I read it to Lux I had to choke back tears. I always try to hide

from her when her books make me cry, I think because if she asks me why I'm crying I won't know the answer, won't find the words to explain. I try to let her know that things can feel a lot of different ways at once and that's ok, but I keep from her some of the great sorrowful joyful overwhelm where it catches in my own throat because being three and a half is complicated enough, and there will be time for all the big feelings later on. At least I hope it's true.

I did the libation with you guys too, feeling strange and abstracted but connected, refracted in time and space, but that's what a ritual is, right? A technology of connection, just like zoom, or a book, or - maybe - this letter.

Sending love to you,
JD

Fri, March 19 10:43 PM

JD,

your writing is incredible. it rushes over me and pulls me in, has me saying "oh" audibly aloud and also giggling. i'm struggling to find words to respond. struggling in my long days to find time for the pleasure of it. struggling to find any words in what's coming up in my body in regards to Atlanta. it makes me again want to pause. to slow. to weep. to allow the pleasure in a bit. the sun is dappling and dancing in my treatment room where i haven't seen a client in a whole year. it resonates with what folks left behind as they left the treatment table. the plants in there breathed it in, and out many times. my plants are tired of the bitter cold with the sun, as it's confusing for their protective systems. i understand this. today, i need to keep my words simple. perhaps as i prepare this tour of holding grief space for others, i'm seeing i haven't built much for myself. perhaps it's just this moment. but to practice being in a moment lately is a real effort. and so, i offer this effort. i will stay in this slow, in the pleasure of writing you, in the tears. i don't cry often. something about our couples therapist telling us she was struggling, allowed me to i suppose. i'm thinking of the picture of you and your child, i'm picturing the drawings offered to us nurses from children all over the nation. just a little bit of sparkle peeking in. a manilla paper filled with balloons made with marker, as if they already know we shouldn't be using actual balloons, so this offering holds much knowing. to honor that sparkle, i will keep it simple. please fill out these questions below as i have for you. as an act of the small yet mighty. and perhaps i'm still stuck on you reflecting that i share often about work. it is, a consumption. wringing myself out gently here for a moment of pause and relief. feel free to also add any questions.

describe a shadow or a light design on the ceiling or wall:

i'm laying on a very old, soft ugly brown couch. leeba is next to me. the ceiling above me a second ago held the shape of a reflected laptop, yet my computer wasn't catching any reflections, so that wasn't it. just as i typed this, i returned my gaze upwards and the lightshow had disappeared. when i close my eyes and am very honest about what i saw- it was a cartoonish flat mouthed hologram of a sandwich with teeth.

something that made you laugh today:

a video of a cat with a video affect on their nose- creating an elongated and wiggling nose form. the surprise of it meeting the obsession i have with bodies taking shape in unexpected ways, is a happy place.

when you close your eyes, and then take a deep breath, what's the first body sensation you have and if you made that sensation into an object- what would that be?

i currently have a raging headache, between the eyes, proximal to my eyebrows, that feels like a circular suction cup gripped and sucking something out of my thoughts. i welcome it. it reminds me of these rubber half spheres i used to pop as a kid in the 80's. i completely forgot they existed. did you play with [these](#)?



[Image Description: Rubber half spheres. An arrangement of tiny rubber half spheres in yellow, blue, purple, green, red, and pink. In the corner, a white hand holds three of the half spheres in a loose grip.]

i need to place my body in the bath. thank you for holding me in the simple in between
nothingless moments. i think i'm craving more of those.

warm,

Mon., April 5, 10:32 AM

Dear devynn,

This meeting, this moment: a strange circle.

Recently and unrelatedly I began corresponding with my old friend Sebastian, also a part-Indigenous trans guy I knew from way back in the squats of Amsterdam. Back then I was an angsty dysphoric femme who used to cook for the movement and I had many bitter questions about trans stuff, rooted in my own gender grief. He was kind about my questions then and he is kind about my questions now, though the questions are different. He is still learning about his Haudenosaunee tradition, but was able to share some teachings from certain elders, as well as some teachings from the possible kin one encounters through the academy: Cedric Robinson, Sylvia Federici, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Fred Moten, and others. One of my first questions I put to him, as a fellow artist and scholar who works with and thinks through materialities, was this:

how do we make kin with the petrochemical byproducts of extractive colonial modernity?

Ok, now you might be laughing, because then I watched deadbird. I wish I could have seen it irl, but there's also something nice about the intimacy of watching a video alone in one's own time, one's own timezone. I was just sitting there with my eyes wide as Manny explained about coming from a fluid place before form.

I was thinking about what Sebastian wrote in his paper Clay and Common Ground: Clanships and Polyspirited Embodiment: "What might be remembered within one's body from those times and placed-based recollections when/where our ancient ancestors were birthed from dormancy? Or from rivers of lava or mercury that surfaced from beneath our oceanic floor bed and solidified into those who we call grandfather or grandmother stones—stones who silently watch our walk upon this earth throughout successive generations while bearing witness in our ability to endure or to relate?"

I mean, the thing is, all those polymers were once our ancestors too.

I've been thinking so much lately about the big grief work we are all being called, I think, to engage. You, out the front of this wave, carrying the social body at the dying of this epoch as we start to take stock of what's lost. In TCM the lung is supposed to be the site of stored grief, which is to say that if that grief is not addressed, the lung will develop a malaise. I've been thinking about what happens to my own body when I consistently refuse to hear what it is saying. I've been thinking of Covid-19.

And I thought about you, your left arm. Now I wear a brace on my left wrist too, a racist brace in rubberised caucasian beige with a big old steel plate on the inside that follows the curve of my palm. And I think of Preciado, another old-world racist, who writes "I am linked by T to electricity, to genetic research projects, to mega-urbanization, to the destruction of forests and the biosphere, to pharmaceutical exploitation of living species, to Dolly the cloned sheep, to the advance of the Ebola virus, to HIV mutation, to antipersonnel mines and the broadband

transmission of information. In this way, I become one of the somatic connectives that make possible the circulation of power, desire, release, submission, capital, rubbish, and rebellion." And I think oh yes - we are all a part of everything - all these things coming to live and die in us. I thought about rubber poppers (a ball that jumps by itself, my kid calls them), ring pops, shitty coffee, macaroons, found pieces of leather, cherry cough drops, lavender peppermint shampoo, bodega shots of whiskey, pink tutus like the ballerinas wear, the way my face goes numb, the way you look at me.

So much to say but words can't contain it, although they have to, we have to.

Instead I'll answer the questions you made for me. They seem like little gifted instructions for embodiment.

Describe a shadow or a light design on the ceiling or wall:

I'm sitting at the kitchen table under a bright hanging lamp. The rest of the room is dark because my kid is asleep and it's just the two of us at home. On Lux's lockdown birthday in May last year I hung up a bright string of pennants and at xmas my sister sent some paper garlands her kid had made; all that stuff is still hanging up in here and casting soft spiky shadows. Lux has a collection of nice sticks she has brought home and they are all standing up on their long ends, elegant shadows on the wall. A plastic solar flower dances under the electric incandescence on the table beneath the salt and pepper shakers and all the little objects that nobody ever gets around to putting away.

Something that made you laugh today:

A photograph of Lux waving a hello kitty flag and homemade cardboard protest sign on which was written DONT DO THAT. Also somebody's tweet about Derrida allegedly giving a lecture all about cows. Perplexed but focused, everyone sat there and took notes about cows. After the break Derrida came back in and said oh I'm told it is pronounced 'chaos.' Something about the inevitability of the failure to communicate yet we try. Funny because it's true.

When you close your eyes, and then take a deep breath, what's the first body sensation you have and if you made that sensation into an object- what would that be?

If I close my eyes and take a deep breath I just become aware of the pain in my body. Across my shoulders and in my hands, arms, upper back. I don't know what the object would look like; a thing with spikes and curves. If I try to sit with this pain it can quickly become overwhelming, and I become aware that I never liked to 'sit with' anything. That I always want to transmute it into something else, to use it as fuel, like hot plastic ready to become a new thing. Extractive logic or transformative narrative, or both? What do you carry/ that also carries you.

Well, devynn, I should send this and sleep. I'm so grateful to you, and to Asiya - it feels like you came into my life just in time.

Thank you,
JD

Mon, April 5, 10:48 PM

Another note, but I couldn't bear to put it in that letter: I'm ok to put the whole of this correspondence in a google doc and if either one of us wants to edit our own letters, fine. Like it's ok with me if it goes public but I'm glad that I wasn't thinking about that outcome when writing, and I would love to stay in touch regardless of whoever will read it. The insta chats feel a little more intimate, like it's nobody's business but ours... though some of it less so, it depends. Lmk what you think and we can put Asiya in the loop somehow. I wanna reiterate too how important this correspondence has been for me - I'm so glad to know you exist. xxxx

Tues, April 20, 11:59 PM

Jesse,

I'm writing you from "genderless" bathroom at the hospital. I'm happy to stow away here although I'm full of gender? it seems my only moments are these secret bathroom moments. I haven't had time to write you in the ways I've wanted to. I also imagine this as part of the honest archive of this moment. Does any Nurse at this moment have a moment for themselves? I'm allowing this form on my end to be messy. Alarms awaiting my urgency just outside the door, with all of the signs on proper mask wearing education. I'm just returning from tour to Philadelphia where I'm from. The altar can anybody help me hold this body was slow. quiet. almost eerily quiet. The team there took to marketing the show in the old school way- flyering. I love the bodily response I have when I remember flyering for my shows. Performance yes but also an invitation to see one of the punk bands I was in. Hessian Session. Skintab Syndicate. The naughty naughty nurses. I had no idea then that I'd become a nurse.

I have to return to my unit. I'm open to any or all of our exchanges being in the mix. It feels like a quick time to know you and time is a beast. Here is a photo of my vantage.

until our weave continues,
devynn



[Image Description: 1. Bathroom. A hospital bathroom. Pale gray walls and tiled floor, toilet, silver appliances, and many wall bars. A beige plastic garbage can in the corner. 2. devynn. A selfie of devynn, crouching, in hospital scrubs, and a white medical face mask. Their face is not seen.]